

Sex Offender Registry

Backgrounder

I. Sex Offenders Registration Act Overview

The Michigan Sex Offender Registry (SOR) is a database containing the names, addresses and listed offense information of all persons in Michigan convicted of certain sexual offenses. The complete SOR is only available for law enforcement purposes through the Law Enforcement Information Network (LEIN).

The SOR was established in 1994, by the Michigan Sex Offenders Registration Act (Public Acts 286, 287, 294 and 355 of 1994). The Act created the database in response to the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Registration Act (42 USC 14071 et seq.) of 1994. This federal act required states to establish specific requirements for persons convicted of certain crimes against minors and those convicted of sexually violent offenses.

The Michigan SOR Act established the Michigan Department of State Police (MSP) as the keeper of the registry and the repository for SOR data. As such, the department works closely with the Legislature to ensure any changes made to the Sex Offender Registration Act comply with federal requirements.

In addition, MSP posts, like other law enforcement agencies, serve as locations where sex offenders can verify and/or change their addresses. MSP personnel also participate in sex offender sweeps and arrest absconders.

For a complete summary of SOR legislation, please [click here](#).

A. Registry Requirements

The SOR Act requires all sex offenders in Michigan to register their address with law enforcement after conviction, prior to sentencing. Offenders remain on the registry for 25 years or life, depending on the conviction. Offenders released from prison must remain on the registry for a minimum of 10 years or the duration of their sentence, whichever is longer.

After registering, offenders convicted of a felony-listed offense must report to a law enforcement agency (a city/township police department, county sheriff or MSP post) to verify their address during the first 15 days of January, April, July and October. Offenders convicted of a misdemeanor-listed offense must report to a law enforcement agency to verify their address during the first 15 days of January (Jan. 1 – Jan. 15) each year. The penalty for failing to verify an address is a graduated penalty ranging from a 93-day misdemeanor to a four-year felony, and the penalty for failing to change an address is a felony.

B. Sex Offenders Registration Act Violations

Individuals not in compliance with the SOR Act are offenders who fail to register, fail to sign the registration form and/or fail to comply with reporting duties, including failing to verify and/or change their address. These individuals are known as absconders.

The SOR Act allows an arrest warrant to be authorized by a prosecutor for an absconder. After a warrant is entered into LEIN, the absconder can be apprehended during a traffic stop or any other contact with law enforcement. In addition, law enforcement agencies can conduct periodic sex offender sweeps, during which offenders' addresses are verified and absconders are actively sought.

Law enforcement relies on the public to help identify absconders as well. Citizens are encouraged to contact their local law enforcement agency if they think someone is in violation of the SOR Act.

II. Public Sex Offender Registry

Similar to the SOR, the Public Sex Offender Registry (PSOR) is a database containing the names, addresses and listed offense information of persons living in Michigan convicted of certain sexual offenses after October 1, 1995, or under the supervision of the Michigan Department of Corrections for a listed offense on October 1, 1995. When first established in 1996, the PSOR was only accessible to the public by visiting a local law enforcement agency to view a paper copy of the list. In 1999, as a result of Public Act 85, the PSOR became available online at <http://www.mipsor.state.mi.us/>. The current site allows for searches by approximate age and/or name, zip code, city, county and university to identify registered sex offenders.

Under the SOR Act, certain offenders are exempt from being listed on the PSOR (even though they remain on the SOR). These offenders include all juveniles and offenders who have successfully completed the probation process outlined in Public Act 240 of 2004. Any juvenile convicted of criminal sexual conduct first or second degree is listed on the PSOR following his/her 18th birthday.

In addition, those individuals who are deceased and offenders who have moved out of the state/country are removed from the PSOR following the submission of a death certificate or notification of a change of address.

A. Offender Photographs

Public Act 238 of 2004 requires the PSOR to include the photograph of each individual registered under the SOR Act. To fulfill this requirement, PA 238 allowed the MSP to obtain photographs from the Michigan Secretary of State.

Offenders without a photograph do not have a Michigan driver's license or state identification card, or the Secretary of State records do not match the information in the PSOR.

III. Sex Offender Registry Statistics*

As of November 18, 2008, there were 43,613 offenders in the SOR; of those 14,888 were incarcerated. On average, 200 new offenders are added to the SOR per month. At the end of the October 2008 verification period, 39,071 offenders were in compliance and 4,492 offenders had failed to comply with the requirements of the Act. Those offenders not in compliance either failed to change their address or failed to verify their address.

Of the 43,613 offenders in the SOR, 25,166 are required to verify their address either yearly or quarterly depending on their offense. Incarcerated offenders and offenders who have reported they left Michigan and moved to another state are not required to verify. During the October 2008 verification period, 21,807 offenders reported in-person to a law enforcement agency to verify their address.

A. Public Sex Offender Registry Statistics

As of November 18, 2008, there were 41,010 offenders on the PSOR. The PSOR does not include juveniles or offenders who have moved out of the state.

*Statistics are updated quarterly following mandated verification periods.

Note: Statistical comparisons among states are often inaccurate because each state has different requirements for who is required to register and how statistics are reported.

IV. Additional Information and Resources

- National Sex Offender Registry: <http://www.nsopr.gov/>
- Other state Sex Offender Registries: <http://www.fbi.gov/hq/cid/cac/states.htm>
- The Center for Sex Offender Management: <http://www.csom.org/>